



March 17, 2020

## **A MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO**

In light of the uncertainty created by the increased impact of coronavirus, closure of schools and businesses, and the on-going need to provide essential services for the most vulnerable in our community, we are confronted with a moment of truth. How best can our YMCA serve our community and maximize our collective efforts to keep children, adults, and families as healthy and safe as possible?

For over 161 years, our local Y has walked in the direction of challenge. We have re-evaluated what it means to be Americans, to be human beings, and to be a YMCA. As we have since 1858, this Y will utilize our time-tested mission as an anchor for an entire community's crucial response to this global challenge.

We will follow the path of the generations before us who were ready to meet their challenges. Volunteers at this very YMCA once suspended services so they could literally walk onto the field battle in the Civil War, carrying bibles and medical supplies to soldiers in pain.

When our grandfathers and great-grandfathers were called to make great sacrifices overseas in World Wars, and grandmothers and great-grandmothers were called to the industrial factory lines. To serve the needs of that time, our Y developed the first-ever child care programs that have continued to be a stalwart in our growing and thriving community.

Historically, our YMCA has been a catalyst to distill and put into action the truly incredible Human Spirit. Together, we have activated the capabilities we possess when we join together in our collective efforts to achieve common goals.

Today, we are humbled to be in this position once again. We must focus our resources on those who need us most during this unprecedented time.

In the near term, we are pivoting our resources to best support the most-pressing needs in our community. We are aligning with our community partners - our schools, agencies and businesses - to serve parents who must continue to work. We must ensure that healthcare workers, first responders and "essential" service providers are able to perform their duties to keep us safe. We will support the efforts of those called to provide the necessary food, products and services to weather this challenge. These families need safe and reliable places and loving and trained caretakers for their children. Our YMCA will absolutely be there for them.



Therefore, we will continue to offer safety-intensified Out Of School Programs for Elementary-aged children. We will also continue with heightened measures to allow our YMCA Early Learning Centers to remain open to provide Child Care during regular hours so that our trusted, safety-certified instructors will ensure children are safe, and their minds will continue to thrive.

In addition to these vital programs, our Y will continue to provide nearly-as-critical social services to vulnerable populations like the youth and teens in our Outreach Programs, and older adults in our cancer-support and disease prevention programs. We will use phone calls, texts and social media to engage, empathize and demonstrate their importance in comprising the greater soul of our society.

Thus, at noon today, on March 17, we will be suspending operations of our health and wellbeing centers, or pools, camps and program locations. This will continue until at least April 1st, although we work to stay as fluid and dynamic as our children, families and community partners will need us to be.

We will take advantage of social media to not only share updates, opportunities and information that will be essential to those we serve, but to also find the God-given opportunities to further our mission. Together we must be diligent to the science of disease, but to also find ways to celebrate our spirits, minds and bodies and to find comfort and relief through emotional connection.

To support your health and wellbeing goals, we are offering Y360, an exciting new YMCA on-demand fitness program for adults and kids to do at home. You and your family can exercise together and have some fitness fun! You can access it today at [Y360 On-Demand](#).

We will also look at safe and effective opportunities to engage people in their homes with the superior fitness leadership that is the hallmark of our healthy living operations. Watch for this on Facebook or other on-line platforms.

Please use our website at [www.scottcountyfamilyy.org/staying-healthy-at-our-ymca](http://www.scottcountyfamilyy.org/staying-healthy-at-our-ymca) for updates and opportunities.

As you can see through these various programs and services, your Y is committed to be there for those who need us most.

**We ask that you join us in the effort.** We ask that you continue to invest in your membership so that we can maintain vital, life-changing, and life-saving programs at the Y. If necessary, we will certainly put your membership on hold. We will have this capability online as soon as possible. We will also maintain staff at our Welcome Centers who can assist changing memberships over the phone.



We know your membership is meaningful to you and that meaning lies in the relationships we have built at the Y. These relationships are based upon how much you care about our community, and your desire for everyone to have the opportunity to thrive – no matter what our world is facing.

Thank you for joining us. We are stronger together.

We are working closely with community leaders, often on an hourly basis, and we will continue to communicate with you on the opportunity to return to full services.

In the meantime, we hope that you will join us in our efforts to serve those in our community who need us most. Thank you for your support as we work diligently to ensure the health and safety of our community. We work together in the spirit of those who have come before us, and with faithful regard to the children we are serving today who will continue this tradition for generations to come.

Please stay safe. And thank you for the opportunity to serve,

Brad Martell

*CEO, Scott County Family YMCA*